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Follow-up to the outcome of the twenty-sixth special session: implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

Note verbale dated 28 December 2005 from the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and transmits herewith a copy of the Declaration of San Salvador (see annex), adopted by the Heads of State and Government of the States members of the Central American Integration System, meeting in San Salvador on 11 November 2005 in the framework of the Fourth Central American Congress on STIs and HIV/AIDS, the Fourth Central American Meeting of People Living with HIV/AIDS and the Third Latin American and Caribbean Forum on STIs and HIV/AIDS.

In this regard, the Permanent Mission of El Salvador requests the Secretary-General to have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 45 of the agenda of the sixtieth session.

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Annex to the letter dated 28 December 2005 from the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Extraordinary summit of Heads of State and Government of the States members of the Central American Integration System (SICA) San Salvador, El Salvador, 11 November 2005

Draft declaration of San Salvador

We, the Heads of State and Government of the States members of the Central American Integration System (SICA), meeting in San Salvador on 11 November 2005 on the occasion of the Fourth Central American Congress on STIs and HIV/AIDS, the Fourth Central American Meeting of People Living with HIV/AIDS and the Third Latin American and Caribbean Forum on STIs and HIV/AIDS,

Considering

1. That HIV/AIDS is a worldwide epidemic that constitutes a major challenge for the SICA member States, has a devastating impact on thousands of infected and directly affected people and takes an enormous social and economic toil that requires a harmonized, coordinated and urgent response, at both the institutional and individual levels;

2. The commitment made by all countries of the world, at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, with regard to the Millennium Development Goals for 2015, which call on us to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS;

3. The commitment made by all countries of the world at the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, held in June 2001, to meet the specific time-bound targets enumerated in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS;

4. The commitment made by all countries of the world at the 2005 World Summit in relation to HIV/AIDS, in particular with regard to:

(1) Fully implementing all commitments established by the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS through stronger leadership, the scaling up of a comprehensive response to achieve broad multisectoral coverage for prevention, care, treatment and support, and the mobilization of additional resources from national, bilateral, multilateral and private sources;

(2) Developing and implementing a package for HIV prevention and care with the aim of coming as close as possible to the goal of universal access to treatment by 2010;

(3) Working actively to implement the "Three Ones" principles in all countries, including by ensuring that multiple institutions and international partners all work under one agreed HIV/AIDS framework, with one national coordinating authority having a broad-based multisectoral mandate, and under one agreed country-level monitoring and evaluation system;

5. The acknowledgement at the Summit of the Americas in 2001 that HIV/AIDS represents a major threat to the security of our people and the commitment to be

united in our resolve to adopt multisectoral strategies and to develop our cooperation to combat this disease and its consequences;

6. The commitment made by the Heads of State and Government of the Americas at the Special Summit held in Monterrey to intensify prevention, care and treatment efforts within the hemisphere; and the appeal to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to identify criteria to enable the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to have greater access to its resources;

7. The commitment made by the eight countries of Meso-America, members of the Puebla-Panama Plan, to design and put in place cooperation mechanisms for the implementation of joint initiatives to combat HIV/AIDS;

8. Our commitment, made at various summits and reiterated at our twenty-sixth regular meeting, held in Tegucigalpa on 30 June 2005, to "step up actions aimed at more effectively combating the HIV/AIDS pandemic and the challenge that it represents, and improving treatment for people living with the virus";

9. The efforts made by the various bodies of the Central American Integration System, in coordination with international cooperation agencies and civil-society organizations in the region, to give effect to the resolutions adopted at the presidential summits for the purpose of protecting the people of Central America from the threat of the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

Declare:

1. Our firm commitment to continue working to combat HIV/AIDS, pursuing all State efforts as a matter of urgency and ensuring that national and regional responses are harmonized and coordinated;

2. Our conviction that the stigma and discrimination suffered by people infected with or affected by HIV/AIDS impose a heavy burden that is totally unacceptable, for which reason we will take all necessary steps, through legal measures and through education, information and communication, to ensure that the issue is addressed more effectively throughout the population, with the aim of reducing discriminatory attitudes and improving awareness of and access to rights protection for people living with HIV/AIDS;

3. Our commitment to refocus our HIV/AIDS prevention efforts, including specific programmes designed and managed with the active participation of the groups most vulnerable to HIV and people living with HIV/AIDS, as well as prevention programmes for the general public based primarily on the ABC approach (Abstain, Be faithful, use a Condom);

4. Our acknowledgement that the impact of HIV on children is one of the most devastating effects of the epidemic and our agreement to fully support the world campaign on children and AIDS, within the framework of the Millennium Development Goals;

5. Our commitment to make significant progress towards achieving the goal of universal access to HIV/AIDS treatment by 2010 and our firm intention to meet that goal as soon as possible, including by the following means:

(1) Prompt initiation of a process of harmonizing HIV/AIDS management and treatment in all SICA member States in order to improve access, quality and

coverage by taking advantage of opportunities to achieve economies of scale and engage in joint price negotiations;

(2) Cooperation among the region's various health systems in order to achieve a real increase in the capacity to provide treatment for HIV/AIDS;

(3) Support for coordination efforts among the countries of the region in order to facilitate the acquisition and appropriate distribution of drugs and testing equipment;

(4) Our commitment to improve access to HIV/AIDS drugs at reasonable prices, including the use of the flexibilities associated with intellectual property, as considered in the Doha Declaration on the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) and Public Health, as well as subsequent agreements of the World Trade Organization and the side letters to the Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA-DR), which confirm the parties' commitment to ongoing access to such flexibilities;

6. Our recognition of the commendable efforts of the Council of Central American Ministers of Health (COMISCA), the General Secretariat of the Central American Integration System, the SICA Secretariat for Social Integration in Central America (SISCA) and the heads of national HIV/AIDS programmes, and our appreciation to the various international specialized agencies and regional civil-society associations working in the field of health and to the World Bank for its support for the formulation and implementation of the Regional HIV/AIDS Project for Central America, an invaluable instrument that will help protect and improve the health of the people of Central America;

7. Our commitment to maintain and scale up financial resources from national sources that are earmarked for the HIV/AIDS response and thereby meet the goal of universal access to prevention and treatment;

8. Our commitment to adhere to the "Three Ones" principles and, by extension, our commitment to share our experiences and best practices with regard to strengthening national authorities to guide the HIV/AIDS response effectively, monitoring and evaluating that response and maximizing the effectiveness of national strategic frameworks;

9. Our agreement to set up a network to promote cooperation among SICA member States on the HIV/AIDS response, with the participation of health and other government authorities, civil-society representatives — in particular, people living with HIV — and a mechanism for consultation with international cooperation agencies and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), in order to facilitate:

(1) Exchange of experiences and lessons learned;

(2) Exchange of practices and procedures relating to the acquisition of drugs and other supplies, with the aim of harmonizing such procedures and taking advantage of opportunities to improve prices and the delivery of supplies across the region;

(3) Elaboration of joint responses to the region's mobile and migrant populations;

10. As leaders of the people that we represent, we unite in one voice to call on pharmaceutical companies to find ways of reducing the price of antiretroviral drugs in the region so that universal access to those drugs can be achieved;

11. Lastly, we call on bilateral and multilateral international cooperation agencies, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and friendly countries to redouble their efforts to provide technical and financial support to the region in order to reduce the incidence of new HIV infections and to improve treatment for people living with HIV.

We, the leaders of the States members of SICA, wish to thank Dr. Peter Piot, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, for participating in the events now being finalized and in the summit held today.

The Heads of State and Government of Belize, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama and the Dominican Republic, as well as special guests, wish to express their deep appreciation to the people and Government of El Salvador for their hospitality during this meeting.

Done at San Salvador, El Salvador, on 11 November 2005.

Vildo Marin
Minister of Health of Belize

Abel Pacheco de la Espriella
President of Costa Rica

Elías Antonio Saca
President of El Salvador

Oscar Berger Perdomo
President of Guatemala

Merlin Fernández
Minister of Health of Honduras

Alfredo Gómez
Vice-President of Nicaragua

Camilo Alleyne Marshall
Minister of Health of Panama

Honorary witnesses:

Peter Piot
Executive Director of UNAIDS

Jorge Odir Miranda
Civil society representative